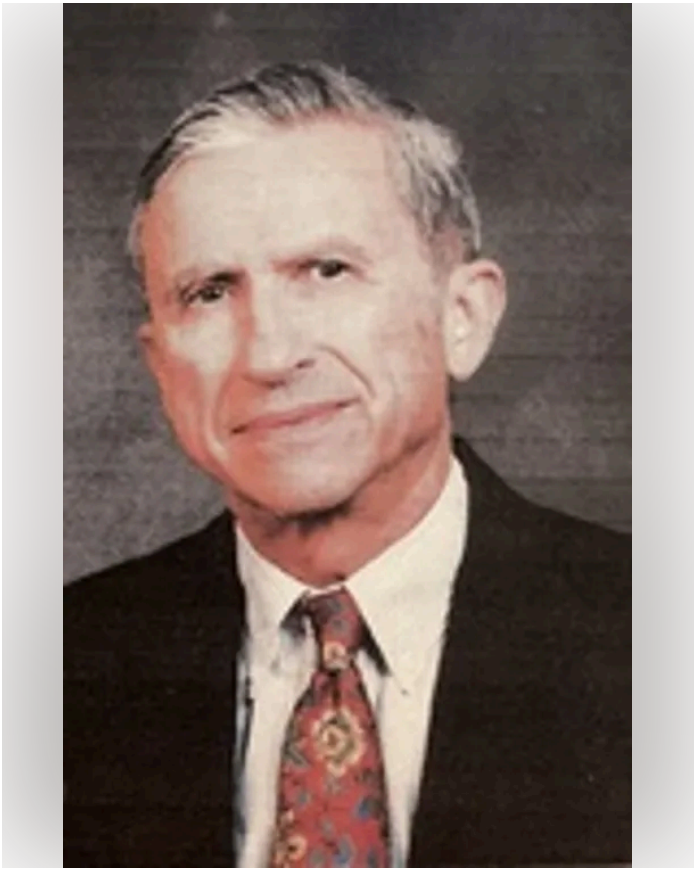
Robert L. Durning



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Robert L. ("Bob") Durning, Jr., 93, died peacefully at his home on Wednesday, August 27. A beloved husband, father, and grandfather, Bob was best known for his ever-present smile, his gentlemanly grace, his warm sense of humor, and his keen intellect. Bob was a lifelong scholar, with a special affection for the arts and, particularly, for exceptional writing and composition. He studied violin at an early age and had been a member of his school orchestra and church choir. He could recite many stanzas of poetry from memory, he accumulated a collection of cherished books, he nurtured his aptitude for Latin throughout his life, and he never missed an opportunity to pen splendid letters to friends and loved ones. His lifelong passion for writing and history culminated in his authorship of an exhaustive and novel history (with invaluable help from his wife, Dorothy) of the development of the Louisville Bar from 1781 to 1980, which he completed during his life, but which is, as yet, unpublished. Bob also loved sports and games. He was a capable tennis player, from his

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days on the Male High Tennis Team through his senior years. He also had a particular enthusiasm for poker and scrabble. Bob was a member of the Louisville Boat Club for more than fifty years, where he was an enthusiastic day sailor and avid tennis player.

A native of Louisville, Bob graduated cum laude from the Louisville Male High School in 1949, from the University of Louisville's College of Business in 1954, and from the evening division of its School of Law in 1957. A member of the Louisville Bar Association as well as the bars of both the Kentucky and U. S. Supreme Courts, he practiced law for more than fifty years, specializing in trial preparation and appellate procedure. He handled a large variety of appeals involving such significant issues as defending the constitutionality of provisions of Louisville's housing code requiring the installation of sanitary facilities in preexistent buildings, establishing the right of the Metropolitan Sewer District to acquire facilities owned by an annexed territory, the right of a business owner to recover damages from a labor union for its role in the destruction of the owner's business, and the right of a union member to recover damages from a union for breach of its duty to obtain employment for him. Bob's legal prowess was essential in obtaining the contested court decision necessary to permit the construction of the Cherokee Park condominiums located at 1400 Willow Avenue as well as the removal of deed restrictions necessary to construct the headquarters for the St. Matthews Fire Department. Later in his career, he served as a deputy commissioner for the judges of the Jefferson Circuit Court, receiving upon his retirement a written commendation from Laurence E. Higgins, the longtime Chief Judge of the Jefferson Circuit Court, for "outstanding distinction and honor in excess of twenty years," and stating further

that “he is a true genius in legal research, and the preparation of legal opinions, especially those where very fine lines are drawn and explained.”

Bob was preceded in death by his parents, Elizabeth Hamilton and R. Lee Durning Sr.; his brother, A. Hamilton Durning; his sister, Jane D. LaPin; and his son, Robert L. Durning III. He is survived by his wife, Dorothy Livers Durning; his son Kent (Meggin Wishon); his sister, Blynn D. Field; his grandchildren, Robby, Nora Lee, and Desmond; and numerous nieces and nephews. At his request, there will be no visitation. Expressions of sympathy may be made to the Heuser Hearing Institute, 111 Kentucky Street, Louisville Kentucky, 40203; or to a charity of the donor’s choice.

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